

# RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS

Minutes of the Riverside City Council Meeting

Held on

Thursday, June 8, 2023

Riverside, OH

**CALL TO ORDER:** Mayor Williams called the Riverside, Ohio City Council Work Session to order at 6:00 pm at the Riverside Administrative Offices located at 5200 Springfield Street, Suite 100, Riverside, Ohio, 45431.

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:** Mayor Williams led the pledge of allegiance.

**ROLL CALL:** Council attendance was as follows: Mr. Denning, present; Mrs. Franklin, absent; Ms. Fry, present; Mr. Joseph, present; Ms. Lommatzsch, present; Mr. Maxfield, present; and Mayor Williams, present.

Staff present was as follows: Josh Rauch, City Manager; Nia Holt, Zoning Administrator; and Katie Lewallen, Clerk of Council.

**EXCUSE ABSENT MEMBERS:** Mr. Maxfield moved, seconded by Mr. Joseph, to excuse Mrs. Franklin. All were in favor. **Motion carried.**

**ADDITIONS OR CORRECTIONS TO AGENDA:** No changes were made to the agenda.

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA:** Deputy Mayor Lommatzsch moved, seconded by Mr. Joseph, to approve the agenda as presented. All were in favor. **Motion carried.**

## WORK SESSION ITEMS:

**I. Property Maintenance Code** – Ms. Holt presented background on the comprehensive review of the City's Property Maintenance Code enlisting the assistance of Raftelis. Sidewalk standards from other communities in the region were reviewed to update Chapter 1341. The top three violations found were tall grass - 35 percent; trash/junk - 25 percent; and unpermitted construction - 13 percent. Repeat offenders were found to be 25 percent of the violations. The update will help clarify requirements and conditions representing compliance and non-compliance with the code, streamline the public nuisance determination process, and strengthen and clarify sidewalk and curb regulations. Key changes include: the consolidation of the property maintenance code, Chapter 1331, and nuisance abatement, Chapter 1343; an added repeat violator section; addition of trailers under the Junk and Inoperable Vehicles section; and the sidewalk and curb section indicating that the planning commission and not BZA can waive the standard, ODOT standard of construction is required, and a surety bond option added. Under the high grass and noxious weeds and vegetation the current code posts an annual notice in the newspaper and once tagged there is a 10-day order to abate; the new code posts the annual notice on the city website and once tagged there is a 5-day order to abate. The public nuisance abatement was also streamlined from the two-step notification process of an initial letter and final determination letter with a 15-day abatement/appeal to a 10-day abatement/appeal and the applicant having the right to request an extension from the zoning administrator. A change was made to the

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Property Maintenance Appeal Board members. The current members are the planning commission chair, BZA chair, Health & Safety chair, and two residents at large. The new board will consist of the planning commission chair, the BZA chair, the public service director, the community development director, and the police chief. In addition, anyone wishing to appeal is required to submit a detail basis of appeal using the code. The same procedure for nuisance and property maintenance cases will also be followed. Council will see the ordinance at the next council meeting.

Discussion was had on the publishing of the annual notice and the legal requirements. Ms. Holt stated that switching it from publishing in the newspaper to the website does not violate any state law. Mr. Rauch stated that to their knowledge as long as they are giving notice that is generally accessible to the public they can do that. Chapter 1331 indicates that they will publish once a year.

Discussion was held on expediting the effective date of the ordinance. Mr. Rauch explained that he typically does not take ordinances or changes to code as emergencies because they want plenty of time for review by council and for the public to look at it. Mayor Williams stated that clarity is very important, and it gives the public the information they need and keeps the city out of jeopardy of giving people incorrect information without giving people the correct due process.

**II. MKSK Comprehensive Land Use Presentation** – Ms. Holt introduced Mr. Kyle May with MKSK. He has been with the city for all the community meetings and has been a champion for their plan. Mr. May reviewed the process the city went through to create the plan and first steps: reconnaissance, community engagement, draft recommendations, and plan development. They are now at the point of adoption of the plan. He stated that during community engagement, approximately 750 people have made contact with MKSK whether in person or online. They came with opinion and thoughts on how to move the community forward with a vast majority of the comments were packed with optimism on where Riverside could go. The philosophy since Day 1 has been that it is a community-led effort. Coming out of Covid, they had to be creative with how they engaged the public and provided for opportunities both in-person and virtual. Over 1,500 comments were made trying to feed into the vision of the future of Riverside. Riverside is unique as it is not one fully physically connected community. They will see a lot of opportunities both physical and non-physical to bring neighborhoods closer together. He stated that the Air Force Museum is important not only for visitors and employment, but also what the Air Force brings the community. A lot of what was heard from the residents was the idea of unity among neighborhoods and neighbors and finding room for the next round of families and housing. Most critical is the idea of stability and building a strong foundation based on a fiscal, sustainable model.

Mr. May stated that the idea is to create a plan that is more visionary and less emergency. The plan is comprised around three core pillars that support the vision of



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One Riverside. First is Places, this is the built environment and physical connections that dot and line the community. Second is Prosperity, this is the economics and fiscal performance and dealing with things like housing, real estate, and personal prosperity. Third is Foundations, this is the enabling infrastructure that allows for all the other activities to occur like mobility, roadway capacity, waterways, sidewalks, potable water, and sanitary sewer. Underlining all of this is the implementation strategy of preparing the plan for adoption and integration into ongoing work planning. He stated that actions are critical to bringing this stuff forward. Actions are the most specific statements in the plan. They are the projects, policies, and/or programs selected for their ability to help move Riverside toward achieving its objectives and overall goals. He stated this is their first shot with this plan. The vision is not going to move, and the goal will also probably not move, but the actions can be assembled today and continue to be built on.

Mr. May stated that place is the weightiest; it is where they have the most opportunity to govern, to act, to act independently, and to develop policy to move a community forward. He reviewed the key findings on what makes Riverside unique in terms of challenges and opportunities. Riverside is disconnected as it is made up of six non-contiguous "islands". They are also in a place where there are regional opportunities. Future land use planning will help with this. Riverside is a young city in the state of Ohio. They can tap into a lot of the burgeoning use opportunities in terms of office, commercial, and regional economic growth. He added that while the future land use plan is not law, it can and should start to inform the way they think about their zoning code. The zoning code is critical having it sophisticated, nuanced, and flexibly built for 2023. Zoning is key and critical and is one of the best first steps to take in the community.

Mr. May stated there are four focus areas that were identified as development "pulse points" where there are opportunities for reinvestment and potential improvements. Of these four focus areas, three have been expanded on within the plan: Rohrer Boulevard, Springfield Street Corridor, and Spinning & Burkhardt Roads. He stated there are concepts for these areas, and they have some scenarios for growth and redevelopment that lead to opportunity to what the region is experiencing in terms of live ability and jobs, what the market is looking for, and what the community is looking for. They have some realistic ideas of each of these areas in terms of market and what the community will support. Mr. May reviewed a few of the key recommendations in terms of Place: socialization and championing the conceptual development strategy – talking about the real physical opportunities; developing a modern zoning code; trails and connecting regionally; and brownfield redevelopment.

Mr. May stated a critical component for Riverside is their prosperity in terms of housing and economic development. There is opportunity to tap more into key sectors in and around Dayton. They have become more serious about economic development and a strategic plan. This allows them to identify sectors and real estate opportunities along with marketing Riverside nationally and internationally. A lot of what is related to the



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plan has to do with capacity – how do they grow or build the plan to do, to think, and to consider. They have a lot of opportunities in redevelopment within the community. A lot of what they will see is what comes next.

Mr. May stated that what enables the next things coming are the foundations already in place. One advantage for the city is having a strong and stable infrastructure below their feet, in and around the city. There are distinct advantages like the storm water fee and the RTA business connectivity. A number of items were listed in no ranking order.

Mr. May stated that the end of the report has an implementation chapter that outlines several actions that should be prioritized by the city. He offered two paths to get to the first steps: having a conversation with the public about the priorities of the plan and talking with staff and the steering committee to determine the things that need to be done right out of the gate to set the city on a strong and stable pathway moving forward to allow them to do other things. They need to sequence their steps; they have to do “A”, but once they do “A”, then they can do “B” and then a lot more with letters of the alphabet. Determining what they do and fund first is a critical way to move forward.

Mr. Maxfield thanked MKSK for the work that was put into this.

Mayor Williams stated a lot of work and community involvement had been put into the creation of this plan. This will allow council to go forward on the next critical steps like the zoning code. He is confident with this as a guide that they can make the changes and take on the challenges. Mr. May stated from an outside perspective that it is not common that the overarching tone and tenor of conversation with the public are purely optimistic and hopeful in nature, but every person that they talked to had an idea about the future of Riverside, which is pretty uncommon. This also means there is an impetus for action. The residents seem to understand there is a lot of building policy that will layer on but something physical, also. He encouraged council to think every time they do something physical or even policy driven they stamp it with a One Riverside moniker. These plans can lead to a lot of buy-in for future work and staffing. Mayor Williams stated that with the number of people that participated bears out that they are willing to take the next step and get involved. A lot of people took it upon themselves to have a voice in the future of Riverside. Mr. May commented that when they got down to the community it was important that every pocket of Riverside felt something and was recognized in some way. He added that is not to say there cannot be some central piece that is Riverside, but in thinking in the three focus areas moving from one to three that was part of the rationale – to try to touch each place in Riverside.

Mr. Rauch thanked MKSK for their part and effort to pull all this together and synthesize it to where it is understandable and actionable. He feels they can tell the community that they are already taking the ideas that they have heard and already start to live into that and put it into action. They intend to keep that moving. He does not intend for this



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to sit on a shelf. Ms. Holt stated that one of the highlights in this plan is that there are some easy wins that don't cost a lot and can get that win right off the bat. They can then build on that and move forward.

Discussion was held on next steps to reach adoption for the plan. Mr. Rauch stated they will give it to council and have them review it and make comments. It will be on the agenda at the July 20, 2023, meeting. Planning commission has already recommended adoption. Mr. Denning stated that this will be visible to investors to see how the city is moving forward. This can lead to, hopefully, grants and doing more positive things in the community. He thanked everyone that had a part in this and participated. They all knew this needed to happen. He feels it was good for council to be at the meetings for the community to see they were part of this. The whole thing has been a positive experience for the community, in general, and it will put a positive spin for the city with investors in the future. Mr. Joseph stated this is a culmination of everybody's input and where the city needs to go. He asked Mr. May how important he thinks outside community development coalitions play in how successful they are able to be. Mr. May replied that CDCs are a valuable tool in Ohio, but they are best deployed when ready to be deployed, when all of the dominos are lined up, the CDC can help knock the dominos down. CDCs are really good at extending the vision on a street level, block level, building level conversations about real development. It sometimes involves a lot of really tight, focused conversation more than they are having right now. His advice is when they have their ducks in a row, zoning, marketing, staffing, then it becomes a real actionable point. They will then need a lot of people to align with them and that body, the CDC, can help with the aligning. Mr. Rauch added that leads to perhaps a CIC, Community Improvement Corporation, that would help function in either a similar role or help in executing some of these things going forward. Discussion was held on the difference between a CDC and a CIC.

Discussion was held on Riverside being located closest to WPAFB. Ms. Holt stated they have to position the city to be at the table and be creative because they don't have the large parcels developers need to put in the housing developments and the infrastructure they need. They need to put partnerships together that introduce different property so they can create those parcels for development. Mayor Williams stated they didn't have a zoning code with a planned unit development, PUD, until a few months ago. It can be hard to market if they are referencing a 17 - 20 year old document that worked in the 1990s. Updating the code helps them to move forward. Mr. May stated that his company has been working on a project in Johnstown, OH, next to the Intel that will employ around 7,000 people when finished. A discussion they had with JobsOhio and other partners pointed to two key things they are looking for, community alignment – a vision, and zoning code. They do not want people to have to work through red tape. Mr. Rauch thanked the community development team and the residents who participated because their participation makes the plan more robust.



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**CITY MANAGER UPDATES:** Mr. Rauch stated that with them working on the cloud and backing up more data their internet pipe is small. They are growing to a point where their growing traffic could lead to network congestion. The city utilizes MyPhoneGuy for phones and coordinates with Tech Advisers. Their recommendation is to cut off fiber service from AT&T and switch to Spectrum at a slightly discounted rate to connect all the buildings to each other, and then continue to work to increase the pipeline to the internet. It is a bit of a cost savings to the city. They are negotiating a four-year contract that will partially help to avoid any upfront cost to build out the fiber. It will be a cost of \$30,000/year for four years, so council will need to take action on it in order for him to move forward. He will bring a resolution to them at the next meeting. Mr. Joseph asked if he got a quote on a comparable from AT&T. Mr. Rauch stated MyPhoneGuy compared AT&T, Spectrum, and AltaFiber; their recommendation was Spectrum. Discussion was held on MetroNet and if AT&T was presented with the issue the city was having that they may come back with a better deal to keep the city. Mr. Rauch stated they did try to do some bargaining with AT&T, and this is where they landed. Mr. Rauch stated that he is comfortable moving forward with the recommendation. This will allow them to push a lot more data without choking up the network. Mr. Maxfield stated it will only get worse with the data that needs to be stored so they need the extra space.

**COUNCIL MEMBER COMMENTS:** Mayor Williams reminded every one of the upcoming St. Helen's festival this weekend. Deputy Mayor Lommatzsch thanked the police department and Officer Toscani for the activity at Saville school last Tuesday. It was well received and well attended. He invited everyone to come to Brantwood School next Wednesday from 5 – 7 pm. All kids are invited to get to know the officers. The Jaycees will be handing out sno-cones. She stated it is important kids find police officers to be people they can relate to and talk to. Mr. Denning promoted the St. Helen's festival and asked everyone to be safe and have a good time. Deputy Mayor Lommatzsch there is an activity at Rohrer Park on June 17, 10 am to 4 pm. Mayor Williams stated there is a car show and food vendors. He added that June is a month of festivals in Riverside.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION:** Mr. Denning moved, seconded by Mr. Joseph, to go into Executive Session to consider the purchase of property for public purpose, or for the sale of public property, if premature disclosure of information would give an unfair competitive or bargaining advantage to a person whose personal or private interest is adverse to the general public interest. Council went into Executive Session at 7:02 pm.

**RECONVENE:** Council reconvened at 7:23 pm.

**ADJOURNMENT:** Mr. Denning moved, seconded by Mr. Joseph, to adjourn. All were in favor. The meeting adjourned at 7:24 pm.

  
Peter J. Williams, Mayor

  
Clerk of Council